

MOTION

Due to the faltering economy, the City of Los Angeles is facing serious financial challenges. The City has just made significant cuts to the budget to address the current shortfall and the shortfall is expected to increase to \$400 million in fiscal year 2009. In order to balance the budget, the City needs to address procedural breakdowns whose inefficiency is costing the City necessary revenue.

One such breakdown is the planning and building permit process for businesses attempting to reopen after a change in ownership or disaster, including fire. Other breakdowns include the challenges that businesses face when making small changes to existing facilities. Numerous commercial and industrial businesses experience significant delays in obtaining the required permits, especially in cases when the level of review is less than new construction projects. These delays cost the City in unrealized sales and business tax revenue and stagnant job growth, results that are counterproductive in correcting the economy.

During past economic downturns, the City has made extra efforts to resolve procedural challenges that detract from business development. To increase revenues and promote job growth, the City of Los Angeles must solve the permit backlog by expediting the cases that require minimal effort from the Departments of Building and Safety, City Planning and the Bureau of Engineering. By bringing these businesses online faster, the City of Los Angeles will not only become more business friendly, it will also reduce the budget deficit through increased revenue and stimulate the local economy.

These breakdowns in the City's permitting process must be addressed immediately. Whether the Departments select one day a week to directly address these issues or determine a more streamlined process, these changes need to be implemented without any delays. An inter-departmental taskforce should be created to expedite permit approvals and explore solutions to resolve this problem.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Building and Safety chair a taskforce comprising of the Department of City Planning, the Bureau of Engineering and the Chief Legislative Analyst report back to the Council in 30 days on an ongoing plan that will facilitate an expedited permit approval process for construction projects that require the least amount of departmental efforts and will generate tax revenue for the City.

PRESENTED BY: Wendy Greuel
WENDY GREUEL
Councilwoman, 2nd District

SECONDED BY: Lee P. Ryan

JAN - 6 2009

267

09-0032